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Selected Speeches and News Releases

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TOBACCO INDUSTRY TO BUY 491.5 MILLION POUNDS OF 1990 FLUE-CURED TOBACCO

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that U.S. cigarette manufacturers intend to purchase 491.5 million pounds of flue-cured tobacco, farm sales weight, from the 1990 crop.

The 1990 flue-cured tobacco quota will be based upon the total of the intended purchases, the average of flue-cured tobacco exports during the preceding three years (366.1 million pounds) and the quantity of tobacco needed to attain reserve stock levels.

The secretary of agriculture may increase or decrease this total by three percent. The quota will be announced by Dec. 15.

The manufacturers' purchase intentions for the 1989 crop of flue-cured tobacco were 543.6 million pounds.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-6787.

#

SOUTH CAROLINA PACKER RECALLS SLICED LUNCHEON MEAT FROM LOCAL STORES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—One shipment of "Harvin Sliced Luncheon Meat," packed in 6-oz. vacuum packages and sold exclusively to grocery and convenience stores in a 20-mile radius of Sumter, S.C., is voluntarily being recalled by Harvin Choice Meats, Inc., of Sumter, because some of the product may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*, bacteria that can cause serious illness.

Only the sliced luncheon meat is being recalled. No other products made by the firm have been implicated.

"Although no illnesses have been reported, consumers should not eat the luncheon meat or even open the package," said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. "The packages should be returned to the place of purchase."

Harvin Choice Meats, Inc., is collecting the 240-pound lot involved

from 100 stores. The 6-ounce packs are shipped to the stores in cartons stamped with the production code "0318." Each carton contains either 8 or 16 packages, with approximately 5 slices of luncheon meat in each package. Each carton and package bears a USDA inspection seal with "Est. 6592" printed inside the seal.

"The problem was discovered through USDA's routine monitoring program for *Listeria monocytogenes*," Crawford said. "The firm is fully cooperating with USDA."

Consumption of food contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* can cause listeriosis, a rare but potentially serious disease. In general, healthy people are believed to be at little risk from listeriosis; most vulnerable are those with weakened immune systems—infants, the elderly, and the chronically ill. Listeriosis in pregnant women can cause miscarriage.

Symptoms of listeriosis in adults include the sudden onset of flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills, headache, backache, and sometimes abdominal pain and diarrhea. Symptoms in newborns include respiratory distress, refusal to drink, and vomiting.

Consumers with questions about the recall may phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The hotline can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (EST) Monday through Friday. Callers in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area should call 447-3333. Both phone numbers provide access to a telecommunications device for the deaf.

FSIS inspects all meat and poultry sold in interstate commerce to ensure that it is safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Dec. 8, through midnight Thursday, Dec. 14.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1988 and 1989 crop

base quality loan rates of 51.80 and 50.00 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1988 and 1989 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1989-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

Based on data for the week ending Dec. 7, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

Northern Europe Price 78.44

Adjustments:

Average U.S. spot market location 12.53

SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton 2.20

Average U.S. location 0.39

Sum of Adjustments -15.12

ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE 63.32 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

Northern Europe Price 78.44

Northern Europe Coarse Count Price -74.13

4.31

Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton -4.75

-0.44

COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT 0 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Dec. 14.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

#

SRI LANKA ELIGIBLE FOR MORE WHEAT UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture John B. Campbell today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 350,000 metric tons of U.S. wheat to Sri Lanka under the U.S.

Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of wheat will be made to buyers in Sri Lanka at competitive world prices. The export sales will be made through normal commercial channels with the assistance of commodities from the inventory of the Commodity Credit Corp. This will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Sri Lankan market.

This allocation will be valid for a one-year period as provided for in the invitation for offers. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information, telephone William Hawkins, (202) 382-9240, or Larry McElvain, (202) 447-3224. A tape-recorded message announcing the issuance of invitations under EEP is available on the CCC Operations Hotline, (202) 447-2042.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR USSR

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 285,000 metric tons of wheat (185,000 tons of hard red spring and 100,000 tons of hard red winter) for delivery to the USSR during the 1989-90 marketing year and under the seventh year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement signed Aug. 25, 1983 and extended Nov. 28, 1988.

The marketing year for wheat began June 1.

Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the seventh year of the agreement (which began Oct. 1, 1989 and ends Sept. 30, 1990) total 11,478,800 tons, of which wheat is 500,000 tons and corn is 10,978,800 tons. Sales of soybeans total 160,700 tons and soybean meal total 705,000 tons. In addition, sales of barley total 7,100 tons.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

U.S.-USSR AGREE ON AGRICULTURAL TEAM EXCHANGES

MOSCOW, Dec. 8—The U.S. and USSR Joint Committee on Cooperation in Agriculture (JCCA) signed a protocol today after two days of talks to carry out exchanges of teams on agricultural economics, agricultural science, forestry, and food processing in 1990-91.

The exchanges allow research and technical experts from both countries to share agricultural information, and to establish and strengthen working relationships with scientific counterparts.

The protocol was signed by Richard T. Crowder, under secretary of agriculture for international affairs and commodity programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Y.A. Borisov, deputy chairman, State Commission on Food and Purchases.

"This ninth meeting of the JCCA provides both sides with a challenge to build on past institutional linkages and establish new ones," said Crowder. "It also provides an equally important opportunity for increased mutual understanding through people-to-people contacts."

The JCCA agreed to establish a new Forestry Working Group, and delegates from USDA's Forest Service met with counterparts from the Soviet State Forestry Committee to expand collaborative efforts on environmental issues and forestry management systems. The Food Processing Working Group met for the first time. Department of Commerce representatives and their Soviet counterparts at the State Commission on Food and Purchases planned activities to promote U.S.-USSR joint ventures and private sector relations in food processing.

Under the protocol, exchanges focusing on trade will include studies of: the evolving Soviet comparative advantage in agricultural trade of some commodities; new commercial entities of the trade system which is under development; the market potential for processed packaged foods and other high value products through direct contact with representatives of USSR trade agencies and firms; and the economic aspects of the cotton, fur, poultry, and vegetable oil industries.

U.S. scientific teams will visit the Soviet Union to also study: Soviet technology in animal husbandry practices and to determine the prospects for supplying beef and dairy cattle semen and embryos; weather and climate applications for agriculture; preserving reindeer ecological systems; enhancing and protecting water quality; germplasm exchanges for fruit and nut trees; and development of a joint plant genetics resource base. A joint publication on soil and water conservation will be produced.

For additional information contact Richard Rortvedt, USDA/Office of International Cooperation and Development, Scientific and Technical Cooperative Division, 302 McGregor Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20250-4300; telephone (202) 653-7857.

Jane M. Leo (202) 653-9314

#

PRODUCER-LED PSEUDORABIES PROGRAM OFF TO GOOD START

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8—With seven states formally enrolled and another six having applied, excellent early progress is being made in the campaign to eradicate pseudorabies, a costly disease of swine and other livestock, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official reported today.

"Producer-led and producer-oriented, the cooperative state-federal-industry pseudorabies eradication program is off to a good start," said Larry B. Slagle, acting administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"Working through the National Pork Producers Council, producers have taken the lead in getting this program organized and funded," Slagle said. "And pork producers are heavily represented in the 46 state advisory committees that have been formed to date. Only Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah, with less than one percent of the nation's swine population, have not yet established advisory committees.

The seven states already in the four-stage eradication program are: Arizona, Missouri, and Texas in Stage I—preparation; Georgia and Illinois in Stage II—control; and Arkansas and Wisconsin in Stage III—mandatory herd clean-up. A state enters Stage IV—surveillance, when there are no known infected herds. Free status is achieved when a state goes for one year without finding any infected swine herds.

According to Slagle, applications for program status have been received from Alabama, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Oklahoma and West Virginia. On each of these applications APHIS will consult with the National Pseudorabies Control Board, an industry organization, before status is conferred.

"We expect additional states to apply over the next few months," Slagle said. "By October 1990, all states should be in the program. The goal is to eradicate the disease in swine by the year 2000."

Pseudorabies is a contagious disease that is most prevalent in swine. Although it often causes death in newborn pigs, older hogs may survive the infection but remain carriers of the virus for life. Stress or other conditions may trigger the virus from its latent state in these carrier animals. Pseudorabies, sometimes called Aujesky's disease or "mad itch," also affects cattle, sheep, dogs, cats and other animals. In these species, it almost always causes death. Pseudorabies does not affect humans.

A number of tools will be used in the campaign to eradicate pseudorabies, including genetically engineered vaccines that allow tests to differentiate between infected and vaccinated animals. "In past programs against other diseases, use of vaccines sometimes masked the disease and made it difficult to detect infection," Slagle said. "But advances in biotechnology have made vaccination a valuable weapon in helping wipe out this disease."

Slagle said the pseudorabies eradication effort is unique in that the swine industry took the lead in developing program standards. "In essence, pork producers got together and said, 'This is what we have to do to get rid of this disease.'"

The standards were two years in the making. A final draft was recommended a year ago by the U.S. Animal Health Association, an organization representing the livestock industry and state and federal regulatory officials. In February 1989, APHIS formally approved the standards as the basis of the cooperative state-federal-industry eradication program.

Larry Mark (202) 447-3977

#

USDA BOOSTS FEES FOR INSPECTION, GRADING, CERTIFICATION OF PROC

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will increase fees for certain voluntary, i.e., industry-requested, inspection, grading and certification of processed fruits and vegetables, effective Dec. 11.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the basic hourly rate charged users who have not signed term contracts for these services will rise from the current \$29 to \$31,

and the overtime basic hourly fee will increase from \$5.50 to \$7.

For those having signed term contracts, the hourly charges will rise as follows:

—from the current \$22 to \$25 for yearly in-plant full-time services, i.e., services of a minimum of 40 hours per week;

—from the current \$27 to \$28 for full-time in-plant services for less than a year's duration, and of more than four week's duration.

Plants using the services for fewer than four weeks per year will be charged the non-contract hourly rate of \$31, Haley said.

A nearly 15-percent increase in program costs in the last three years necessitates the changes, Haley said. Authority for such changes rests in the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, which requires that fees be reasonable and cover the cost of rendering services as nearly as possible.

Notice of the increases will appear as a final rule in the Dec. 11 Federal Register. Copies and further information may be obtained from Raymondo O'Neal, USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Processed Products Branch, Rm. 0721-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 447-5021.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

#

USDA PROTECTS SEVEN NEW PLANT VARIETIES AND REISSUES FOUR CERTIFICATES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued certificates of protection to developers of seven new varieties of seed-reproduced plants, including bean, ryegrass, soybean, tomato, triticale and wheat. Certificates also are being reissued to the Northrup King Co., Minneapolis, for four tobacco varieties.

Kenneth H. Evans, an official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service in Washington, D.C., said developers of the new varieties will have the exclusive right to reproduce, sell, import, and export their products in the United States for 18 years. Certificates of protection are granted after a review of breeders' records and claims that each new variety is novel, uniform, and stable.

The following varieties have been issued certificates of protection:

—the Yukon variety of bean, developed by the Asgrow Seed Co., Kalamazoo, Mich.;

- the SR 4000 variety of ryegrass, developed by Seed Research of Oregon Inc., Corvallis, Ore.;
- the Conrad variety of soybean, developed by the Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experiment Station, Ames, Iowa;
- the Ohio 8243 variety of tomato, developed by Dr. Stanley Z. Berry and The Ohio State University, Wooster, Ohio;
- the Triti-Gold 22 variety of triticale, developed by Dean Bork, Wausauke, Wisc.;
- the 5630 and 5469 varieties of wheat, developed by Lubrizol Genetics Inc., Wickliffe, Ohio.

Certificates of protection for the K326, K340, K394 and K399 varieties of tobacco, owned by the Northrup King Co., are being reissued at this time to be sold by variety name only as a class of certified seed, and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owner.

The certificate of protection for the Conrad soybean variety is being issued to be sold by variety name only as a class of certified seed, and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owner.

The plant variety protection program is administered by AMS and provides marketing protection to developers of new and distinctive seedreproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.

Carolyn Coutts (202) 447-8998

#

USDA AND CHINESE WIND UP WHEAT TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8—Representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the People's Republic of China today concluded a two-week workshop to evaluate a new method of identifying a fungal spore that causes dwarf bunt disease in wheat and restricts imports of wheat by the PRC.

"This workshop represents a breakthrough in that both the United States and the People's Republic of China are working together toward a solution of this identification problem," said Dr. Charles E. Hess, assistant secretary of agriculture for science and education. "We have brought together our collections of spores so the Chinese can inspect and evaluate this new technology with all of the known races of spores we've collected."

The workshop was sponsored by USDA's Agricultural Research Service and was held at ARS' Foreign Disease-Weed Science Research Laboratory in Frederick, Md. Participants at the workshop included ARS scientists, officials from the China Animal and Plant Quarantine Services and a plant pathologist from Oregon State University.

Dwarf bunt disease is caused by the fungus *Tilletia controversa* Kuhn (TCK), a soil-borne organism. The disease reduces the plant's height by up to 50 percent, replaces kernels of grain with useless spores in the seed head, and gives the wheat a fishy odor. In 1973, the PRC began prohibiting imports of wheat with TCK because China reportedly is free of this organism.

The PRC does allow imports of wheat with *T. caries*, a fungus that causes common bunt disease, because that disease is already present in China. However, similarities in the spores of *T. caries* and TCK make it difficult to differentiate between the two.

U.S. scientists have developed a new technique that uses fluorescent microscopy to more accurately identify TCK spores. This technique was successfully demonstrated and tested on 70 fungal spore samples at the workshop, including 40 samples of TCK. Also at the workshop, germination tests were begun to further evaluate the validity of the test results.

Dwarf bunt disease is restricted to winter wheat regions where prolonged snow cover and cold temperatures aid in germination of the spores in the soil. Wheat exports from the Pacific Northwest to China have been restricted because of the PRC ban on imports with TCK.

Demand for wheat in China is rising because of increased consumption of wheat-based processed foods such as steamed bread, noodles, dumplings, Western-style breads, cookies and crackers. Consumption of wheat has outraced production and China increasingly has turned to imports to meet its needs.

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

#

U.S. AND SOVIET OFFICIALS DISCUSS GRAIN TRADE

LONDON, Dec. 8—U.S. and Soviet officials held talks in Moscow on Dec. 5 on grain supplies and grain trade prospects for the two countries. These meetings were a continuation of the regular series of semi-annual

consultations called for under the current U.S.-USSR grain agreement which was signed in 1983 and has been extended through Dec. 31, 1990.

The agreement specifies that the USSR may purchase up to 12 million metric tons of wheat and/or corn for shipment during each October-September agreement year without prior consultations. For this agreement year, the 12 million ton consultation-trigger level was increased on Oct. 25 to 16 million tons, and as a part of this week's meetings, it was increased to 20 million tons.

Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder led the U.S. delegation. The Soviet side was headed by Y. Chumakov, Deputy Minister for Foreign Economic Relations.

Crowder said that the sessions covered an exchange of views on the situation and outlook for grains and a review of actual trade taking place under the agreement.

The Soviets confirmed at this week's meetings that USSR purchases of U.S. corn and wheat for shipment during this agreement year have thus far totalled 11.0 and 0.4 million metric tons, respectively. They also confirmed that their purchases of soybeans and soybean meal have totalled 67,000 tons and about 780,000 tons, respectively.

The total of U.S. corn and wheat purchased for shipment during the just-completed sixth year of the LTA (October 1988-September 1989) reached the highest level for any year since the beginning of these agreements in 1975.

The current U.S.-USSR grain agreement calls for minimum annual shipments of 9 million metric tons, of which at least 4 million metric tons must be wheat and at least 4 million metric tons must be corn. The Soviets have the option of satisfying the remaining 1 million metric tons with either wheat, corn, soybeans and/or soybean meal, on the basis that every ton of soybeans and/or meal, up to a maximum of 500,000 tons, counts as two tons of grain.

The next regular consultation session is scheduled for April 1990 in the United States.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

SCIENTISTS TO THE RESCUE IN QUEST FOR THE ULTIMATE RAISIN

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11—Around Fresno, Calif., researchers are rescuing seeds that could turn into a seedless raisin worth millions of dollars.

That raisin, U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers expect, will be the successor to the Thompson Seedless, mainstay of California's \$600-million-a-year raisin industry.

"What we're after could be called the ultimate raisin," said David W. Ramming. He's a horticulturist for USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

So-called seedless grapes do have seeds, but they're immature and too small for most people to notice, Ramming said. Such seeds usually abort when a grape forms, meaning they can't be used to grow new vines.

So, six years ago, he and colleagues at the Horticultural Crops Research Laboratory in Fresno began using embryo rescue. It's a seedsaving technique that makes it possible to grow experimental grape vines that produce seedless raisins.

So far, Ramming said, the researchers have developed seven types of vines that bear fruit about 14 days before Thompson Seedless.

Raisin growers need a new grape, he explained, because Thompson Seedless used for raisins aren't ready to harvest until very late in the summer. "That means you always run the risk of early rains that can rot any raisin still in the vineyard," he said. This fall, rains ruined an estimated 20 to 30 percent of the California raisin crop.

To sidestep the rain, researchers are seeking a raisin-grape variety that is ready to harvest at least 10 to 21 days sooner, but still have the desirable qualities of the plump, juicy Thompson Seedless.

Ramming and colleagues are speeding the search by rescuing embryos from the immature seed. They then give the embryos special nutrients and other care to boost their survival odds.

Before embryo rescue, Ramming said, the only practical way to develop seedless raisins was to cross a seeded and a seedless parent. Much of that work—and years of time—was wasted because more than 70 percent of the offspring usually produced seeded grapes, worthless for raisins.

But, he said, the new technique enables the scientists to cross one seedless parent grape with another to produce a healthy seedling—a feat

not normally possible in nature. More than half the vines produce seedless fruit.

In using the rescue technique, ARS plant physiologist Richard L. Emershad and coworkers carefully remove immature seed from seedless grapes and gently place it on special nutrients. After about two months, an embryo may be large enough to be moved onto a new mix of nutrients. Seedlings that develop stay in a greenhouse until ready for planting in nearby vineyards.

But even if an embryo can be nursed successfully into a seedling, it must pass tough standards to become tomorrow's super raisin.

"A raisin grape must dry easily to an attractive dark glossy brown and have only fine, thin wrinkles, not thick folds," said Ramming. "It must be high in sugar, taste good and match Thompson Seedless' size. And its undeveloped seed must be so small that you can't detect it."

Seed size is checked with a low-tech but discriminating "crunch test" administered by research technician Ronald E. Tarailo. He bites into a grape or crushes it in his hand, checking to see if he can feel immature seeds.

"If we've got a strong contender, I can usually tell at first bite," Tarailo said. But if he crunches down on a seed, the vine is doomed to be uprooted.

Marcia Wood (415) 559-6070

#

USDA ISSUES INVITATION TO SERVE ON FGIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service is accepting nominations for four members and five alternates on USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service Advisory Committee.

Three of the nominees for full membership will replace current members whose terms are expiring, and will serve for three years starting February 1990. The remaining nominee for full membership will replace a member who has resigned, and will serve the two unexpired years of that term.

The advisory committee consists of 15 members appointed by the secretary of agriculture to represent the interests of producing,

processing, storing, merchandising, research, consuming, and exporting segments of the grain industry. The committee advises FGIS officials in the administration of the U.S. Grain Standards Act. Committee members serve without compensation except for reimbursement of travel expenses associated with committee duties.

Persons interested in serving on the committee or nominating members should write to: W. Kirk Miller, Administrator, FGIS, USDA, Room 1094-S, P.O. Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454, and request a copy of Form AD-755, which must be completed and submitted to Miller at the above address no later than 60 days after the Dec. 7 publication of this notice in the Federal Register.

Allen Atwood (202) 475-3367

#

USDA DECIDES TWO ANIMAL WELFARE ACT COMPLIANCE CASES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture settled two cases in August to enforce the humane care and treatment of animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act.

James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the cases resulted from earlier charges. Details are:

—Eastern Airlines, Inc., with offices at Miami International airport, *Miami, Fla.*, agreed to the issuance of a cease-and-desist order without admitting or denying USDA allegations that it violated federal transportation standards for dogs and cats. Also, as part of the settlement, Eastern produced a training film approved by USDA, and, within one year, will show it to all company employees who accept live animals for transport or handle them during shipment. The airline also agreed to notify USDA officials at least 15 days before each training session so that an APHIS representative may be present. At the conclusion of one year, Eastern will submit a written report certifying the date, location and number of employees who attended the training sessions.

USDA charged Eastern under provisions of the Animal Welfare Act. Allegedly, on six occasions between Aug. 27, 1985, and May 12, 1986, its employees accepted dogs and cats in shipping crates that did not conform to litter, space and ventilation requirements. Also, the crates

allegedly did not bear labels indicating the upright position and presence of live animals, nor did they carry instructions for feeding and watering the animals. Further, the airline allegedly failed to get a written guarantee from the shipper to pay for all expenditures associated with a C.O.D. shipment.

—Wayne Anderson of *Richland Center, Wis.*, ceased to be a dealer licensed under the federal Animal Welfare Act, effective Sept. 25. An administrative law judge prohibited him from renewing or reapplying for a license and ordered him to cease and desist from any future activity regulated by the Act. USDA brought charges against Anderson because he allegedly housed dogs in enclosures that were not structurally sound and maintained in good repair. Also he allegedly failed to establish an effective pest control program and to provide a suitable method of drainage to eliminate excess water rapidly from his premises. On Oct. 14, 1986, Anderson allegedly interfered with and intimidated USDA inspectors to the point that they were unable to complete a routine compliance inspection.

Standards for the care and treatment of certain animals have been required by the Animal Welfare Act since 1966. Animals protected by the law must be provided adequate housing, handling, sanitation, food, water, transportation, veterinary care and protection against extremes of weather and temperature. The law covers animals that are sold as pets at the wholesale level or are used for biomedical research or for exhibition purposes.

USDA enforces the act primarily through administrative prosecutions. Many of these cases are resolved through the consent decision provisions of the regulations. Under these provisions, USDA and the respondent named in the complaint agree to a stipulated order and penalties. If the case is not settled, there is a hearing before an administrative law judge who issues a decision. Any party may appeal the administrative law judge's decision to a USDA's judicial officer. The respondent may appeal an adverse decision by the judicial officer to the Court of Appeals. Failure to respond to the charges in the complaint results in the issuance of a default order assessing penalties.

Dealers and breeders as well as brokers, transportation companies, exhibitors and research facilities must be licensed or registered. USDA personnel make periodic, unannounced inspections to help assure compliance. Action is taken against violators after efforts to secure compliance are unsuccessful, Glosser said.

Questa Glenn (301) 436-7799

#

1989 CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING SCHEDULED FOR DEC. 13

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11—The 1989 Capitol Christmas Tree, a 61-foot Englemann spruce from the Kootenai National Forest in Montana, will be lit at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 13, on the west lawn of the Capitol.

Speaker of the House Thomas Foley (D-Wash.) will light the tree. Also attending the ceremony, which is open to the public, will be members of the Montana congressional delegation and officials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

F. Dale Robertson, chief of USDA's Forest Service, said the Kootenai National Forest in northwest Montana was selected to supply the 1989 Capitol Christmas tree in honor of the Montana State Centennial, celebrated this year. Since 1969, all Capitol Christmas trees have come from national forests.

The tree arrived in Washington by train on Dec. 4. Under direction of the Architect of the Capitol, it has been decorated with 4,000 lights and 6,000 ornaments.

The tree will be lit each evening throughout the holiday season.

Len Carey (202) 475-3782

#

DON'T BLAME THE FISH, IT'S THE ALGAE CAUSING OFF-FLAVOR

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12—It's not muddy water that taints fish flavor, it's the algae.

That's the report from U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists who confirmed that two natural chemicals in algae give fresh water fish a musty and muddy taste. This off-flavor is detected in both sport and farm-raised fish.

"We're looking for the key to turn off the chemicals in algae that cause off-flavor," said Peter B. Johnsen, a research physiologist for USDA's Agricultural Research Service. He said ARS scientists found that the chemicals geosmin and 2 methylisoborneal deposit in fatty tissue of fish within two hours, causing off-flavor.

He said the two chemicals also can make drinking water taste muddy, preventing the water from meeting flavor quality standards.

Johnsen and his colleagues are developing tools for test kits to monitor levels of the two chemicals in drinking water and fish. Knowing when an off-flavor outbreak is starting will help fish farmers and water utilities eliminate the chemicals, he said.

Johnsen's research has sparked interest from water utility officials worldwide. He has received algae samples from Japan to Norway and various U.S. states.

"Controlling off-flavor production is several years away, but everyone who enjoys good-tasting fish and drinking water will benefit," Johnsen said. He is a scientist at the ARS Food Flavor Quality Research Laboratory in New Orleans.

Scientists at the lab want to use biotechnology to limit algae's production of the chemicals. How and why algae found in ponds, lakes, reservoirs, rivers and streams make the off-flavors must first be determined, he said.

It's a slow process of collecting algae from ponds, isolating one cell from a sample in the lab and monitoring its behavior as it grows.

"We're just starting to understand the biochemical machinery of these algae," Johnsen said.

New Orleans scientists confirmed the presence of the two compounds in off-flavor catfish using trained taste panels and a gas chromatograph, which identifies specific chemicals, Johnsen said.

"Freshwater fish absorb the chemicals through their gills," he said, adding that off-flavors are expensive for catfish farmers.

Even if fish ready for harvest are moved to algae-free water or "purge ponds," he said, it takes at least two weeks to flush off-flavors from fatty tissues. Fish lose weight from stress when moved to a purge pond. This delay in harvest requires farmers to use more feed, he said.

While some farmers use purge ponds, most just hold fish in growing ponds until the off-flavor disappears. That slows farmers in stocking new fish, losing valuable growing time for the next crop, he said.

Johnsen said geosmin and 2-methylisoborneol were identified in the mid-1980s as the culprits linked to off-flavor. "What we have to find out is whether the chemicals released by algae are needed or if they are simply a by-product," he said.

Bruce Kinzel (301) 344-2739

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 9.76 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 9.06 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 8.94 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.88 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$6.03 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$5.64 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$5.43 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Dec. 19, at 3 p.m. EST, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

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PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR USSR

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture changes in destination from unknown to the USSR of 103,632 metric tons of corn for delivery during the 1989-90 marketing year and under the seventh year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement signed Aug. 25, 1983 and extended Nov. 28, 1988.

The marketing year for corn began Sept. 1.

Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the seventh year of the agreement (which began Oct. 1, 1989 and ends Sept. 30, 1990) total 11,582,400 tons, of which wheat is 500,000 tons and corn is 11,082,400 tons. Sales of soybeans total 160,700 tons and soybean meal total 705,000 tons. In addition, sales of barley total 7,300 tons.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export

sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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USDA CONSOLIDATES AFRICANIZED BEE PROGRAM ON MEXICO'S EAST COAST

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has shifted the focus of the Cooperative U.S.-Mexican Africanized Bee Program to Mexico's east coast to have the greatest impact on the bees' northward migration.

"By concentrating on Mexico's Gulf Coast, we can place 90 percent of our resources directly in the path of the advancing bee," said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Glosser said the cooperative program already has used trapping and a variety of beekeeping techniques to delay the bee's arrival in the United States. Experts predicted Africanized bees would reach Texas in 1987 or 1988, but the bees are not expected until at least early 1990.

"We hope that consolidating program activities will further delay the bee's arrival in the United States," Glosser said. "Delaying it gives scientists and beekeepers more time to learn how to deal with this insect when it arrives."

Although the program continues limited activity on Mexico's Pacific Coast, it now operates almost exclusively between Veracruz and Tampico, cities on Mexico's Gulf Coast. Fifty trapping teams hang thousands of baited traps to capture migrating swarms of Africanized bees. The traps are checked every two weeks and, if bees are found still alive, they are killed and samples are sent to a laboratory for identification. So far, trapping brigades have hung about 60,000 traps, capturing more than 13,700 Africanized swarms.

Program personnel also use other measures to slow the Africanized bee, said Glosser. They teach local beekeepers how to produce more docile strains of honey bees, and techniques that reduce the impact of Africanized bees. Field personnel encourage beekeepers to mark "good" queens with a bright paint or nail polish so it's easy to see if they are still in the hive. Unmarked queens are quickly replaced with new queens

of desirable stock. Beekeepers are encouraged to produce more drones, or male bees, so queens will have a better chance of mating with desirable drones, thus producing desirable offspring.

Africanized bees were last found on Mexico's west coast 125 miles north of Acapulco. One swarm of Africanized bees was found near Soto la Marina in the Mexican state of Tamaulipas, about 160 miles south of Brownsville, Texas. Experts believe the main Africanized bee population is located about 300 miles south of the Texas-Mexico border.

The Africanized honey bee is the hybrid offspring of European honey bees and pure African queens brought to Brazil in 1956 for research. The African queens escaped into the Brazilian countryside and began interbreeding with resident honey bees. Since then, the hybrid Africanized bees have spread northward, reaching southern Mexico in late 1986.

Janna Evans (301) 436-7251

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FORMER GENERAL MANAGER OF INLAND POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY INDICTED FOR FRAUD

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that a federal grand jury in Spokane, Wash., late yesterday indicted a former general manager of an electric power distribution cooperative on charges of receiving kickbacks, mail fraud, perjury, and racketeering. The grand jury also brought criminal charges against his wife for her alleged activities in furtherance of the scheme.

USDA's Acting Inspector General Leon Snead said the charges against Arnold Brauff and his wife, Phyllis, resulted from a two-and-a-half year investigation coordinated by the U.S. Attorney at Spokane. Snead said personnel from USDA's Rural Electrification Administration furnished valuable assistance to his office during the investigation.

The indictment charges that Brauff, during the period from August 1981 through February 1988, used his position at Inland Power and Light Company, through its subsidiary companies, to fraudulently direct more than \$2.7 million in contractual and other work from Inland and its subsidiaries to the Brenshaw Construction Company of Deer Park, Wash. Inland, an REA borrower until September 1987, was financed in part by over \$49 million in low interest REA loans. Brauff kept his wife's employment with Brenshaw and the fact that he and his wife were

receiving 50 percent of the net profits of Brenshaw, secret from REA, other lenders, Inland, and the public. The indictment also alleges that the Brauffs received approximately \$317,000 from Brenshaw over a six-month period.

Snead said that the perjury allegations against Arnold Brauff arose from Brauff's attempts in September 1987 to quash subpoenas issued by the Office of Inspector General for operating, financial and accounting records relating to Inland's subsidiaries.

If convicted, the Brauffs could each face cumulative sentences of over 150 years imprisonment and fines of \$108,000 for 44 of the counts charged in the indictment. Arnold Brauff, also charged with two counts of perjury, could be sentenced to an additional \$20,000 and 10 years imprisonment. In addition, the charge that the Brauffs participated in a racketeering enterprise carries upon conviction a maximum 20-year jail sentence and possible forfeiture of any assets connected to the alleged violations. The indictment identifies and seeks forfeiture of \$900,000 in real property owned by the Brauffs.

U.S. Attorney John E. Lamp, Eastern District of Washington, Spokane, is prosecuting the case.

Dave Dickson (202) 447-6701

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EGYPT ELIGIBLE FOR MORE WHEAT UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 1 million metric tons of U.S. wheat to Egypt under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Today's 1 million metric ton allocation, added to the 25,000 metric tons remaining under previous allocations, brings the amount of wheat currently available to Egypt under the EEP to 1,025,000 metric tons.

Sales of wheat will be made to buyers in Egypt at competitive world prices. The export sales will be made through normal commercial channels with the assistance of commodities from the inventory of the Commodity Credit Corp. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Egyptian market.

This allocation will be valid for a one-year period as provided for in

the invitation for offers. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information telephone William Hawkins, (202) 382-9240, or Larry McElvain, (202) 447-3224. For a tape-recorded message announcing the issuance of invitations under EEP call the CCC Operations Hotline, (202) 447-2042.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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THIS WEEK'S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS UNCHANGED

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14—Producers may repay their 1988 and 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound

1989-crop

1988-crop

Table

White	40.0.....	40.0
Extra-light Amber.....	37.0.....	37.0
Light Amber	36.0.....	36.0
Amber	35.0.....	34.0
Nontable	33.0.....	33.0

The levels are unchanged from those announced April 20, 1989.

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying xcd4/d02d4d their 1988 or 1989 honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST
John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

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Media Advisory:

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Information

MEDIA ADVISORY

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service and the National Endowment for Soil and Water Conservation will announce the three national winners of the Outstanding Conservation Farmer/Rancher Conservation Awards at 10 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 14. The announcement will be made in room 1605-S of USDA's South Building at 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W.

Wilson Scaling, SCS chief, and Emmett Barker, chairman of the National Endowment for Soil and Water Conservation, will introduce the winning families. The program annually recognizes innovative conservation farmers and ranchers. It is sponsored by the endowment with funding by the DuPont Company. Jack Krol, a group vice president of DuPont, also will participate in the conference.

In addition to the three national winners, a South Carolina family will also be recognized as one of 10 finalists. The couple was unable to participate in late October ceremonies because of Hurricane Hugo. Contact: Diana Morse, (202) 447-4772, or Chris Larson, (202) 447-3608.

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MEDIA ADVISORY

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter will travel to Brussels, Belgium, to participate in the annual U.S.-European Community Ministerial meeting Dec. 15. On Dec. 16, Yeutter will visit Warsaw, Poland, to sign an agreement with the Polish government.

In Brussels on Friday, the U.S. delegation to the ministerial will be led by Secretary of State James A. Baker. Other members include Secretary of Commerce Robert Mosbacher, U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills, and William Riley, administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

At the conclusion of the ministerial, Yeutter will participate in a U.S.-EC press conference at 6 p.m. at the EC Commission, 100 Rue de la Loi, Brussels.

In Warsaw at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Yeutter will sign a cooperative agreement for the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide technical assistance to the Polish Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Economy and Ministry of Rural Life Quality.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.

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